

From: nigel rutley
Sent: Thursday, 6 August 2020 9:25 AM
To: RRAT, Committee (SEN)
Subject: Submission : Driver rest areas, facilities / ammenities.

Sir,

I'm writing to this inquiry in efforts to raise awareness of the constant struggle interstate heavy vehicle drivers like myself face on a daily basis, I always hoped the following issues would be addressed and conditions improve, it just never seems to and have deteriorated to a point where I've become concerned about my personal hygiene, health & safety and also fatigue, because of being exposed to un-necessary risks, I've often made complaints verbally and in writing to relevant sites, locations management & councils which just seems to fall on deaf ears, occasionally I get a response, I'm sorry I'll pass it on, not my job, not our problem, excuse after excuse and no solutions, I'm constantly having to find ways to improvise, access to basic parking for rest, facilities & clean ammenities shouldn't have to be this hard, time consuming and stressful.

Sites: It has taken a pandemic to get clean toilets at some sites, it had taken some sites far too long to comply in accordance with Government COVIDSafe guidelines and was downright dangerous for a couple of weeks because those with run down facilities & ammenities to begin with obviously had a bigger undertaking, some sites closed their ammenities to drivers, It was noticeably apparent most were trying as it was obviously a large undertaking as it was also a very very busy time for the industry, the sites that complied almost immediately were those that kept their facilities maintained regardless, in which all sites should, I understand sites reluctant focus on their ammenities as they're subject to poor treatment & vandalism by the minority that use them or should or say misuse them, I express that point when I make my formal complaints and also suggest that clean, hygienic & functional ammenities can encourage people to respect the facility, as run down facilities can promote disrespect.

Service Centres : We would be nowhere without Service centres facilities & ammenities, I can't thank them enough during this pandemic, it's obvious if they don't provide this service then customers will simply go to one that does, at times there is too many drivers at these centres, parking is full, there's a wait for a shower etc.etc. there's no need to complain to them as it's not their responsibility it is a privilege they provide to us, having said that in event of a full service centre I'm forced to take my break elsewhere & go without, it would come at a great cost for these businesses to maintain this service, I do hope the Government subsidises or allows them to claim this cost from the ATO because they're helping us drivers manage our fatigue & well being, a big problem for interstate drivers is the suburban service centres parking bays are consumed by disrespectful local heavy vehicles, meaning we're forced to find somewhere on the roadside in which the same problem is apparent.

Suburban Parking: As I started to explain parking is a huge problem for interstate drivers, in all cities industrial areas adjacent to sites that we are providing a service to and the community are full of local heavy vehicles or is simply sign posted no parking ! It creates huge fatigue management & safety problems, councils receive a lot of revenue from the sites rate paying, local & federal governments receive so much money that is taxed out of a heavy vehicle, it's operations & drivers income etc.etc. yet fail to provide the infrastructure these industrial areas need....it's a big big problem and will only get worse as the country's demand for goods increases.

Highway rest areas : simply inadequate, disgusting, poorly maintained, poorly policed for illegal use (backpackers & tourists), some stopping bays are dangerous (a death occurred at a new site on the new Pacific hwy in which is dangerously positioned),

It's absolutely appalling yet the driver has got to have a safe journey plan & meet all these NHVR regulations ! I feel like an animal at times the way this country looks after me as mentioned, the whole transport industry and all the industries that rely upon it that the Government receives revenue from the interstate driver appears to be the last catered for.

Thank you for time taken to read my submission.

Nigel Rutley.

Sent from my iPhone